



Deuce Four



Volume 1 Issue 4 1st Battalion 24th Infantry Fort Wainwright, Alaska December 2008

Notes From the Commander

Dear Friends and Family of the Legion:

By the time this newsletter goes to press and is distributed, Christmas will be upon us. Time continues to move quickly, as does all of the great work being done by the Soldiers of Deuce Four. I am impressed everyday with the achievements of our Soldiers and their Iraqi counterparts. All four companies have complex and unique problem sets that they are dealing with professionally and expertly. In addition, without the tireless efforts of our maintainers, sustainers, and Battalion staff, this work would not get done. It is truly a team effort.

Quality of life continues to improve across the task force. Each combat outpost has different challenges that are addressed as time and resources become available. We are making strides in all areas. In addition, we continue to send Soldiers on R&R leave, so if you see any of our Legionnaires at Ft. Wainwright, please shake their hand and let them know how proud you are of all that they are doing.

Recently, CSM Fulks and I awarded the Combat Infantryman Badge, Combat Action Badge, and Combat Medical Badge to several great Americans in Barbarian Company. These heroes join the ranks of many other great Soldiers with combat awards who have gone before them, to include our own Honorary Colonel of the Regiment, COL(R) John Komp, a veteran of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. I pinned the badges on these Soldiers at Key West in a night-time company formation in the backdrop of a large bonfire. It was a ceremony fitting for Warriors. It was an honor for me to be a part of this great event.

Thank you for all of your support, thoughts, and prayers. CSM Fulks and I are very proud of this Battalion and the families who support us. It is an honor for both of us to lead the Legion in our Nation's war on terror.

STRENGTH AND HONOR

LTC Brian Reed
CDR, Deuce Four

LEGIONNAIRES

SEMPER PARATUS



Notes from the Chaplain

We have gotten past Thanksgiving and have entered the Christmas season. We are now between two holidays while we are separated from each other. For us in Iraq we will miss the joy of being with our families and watching the kids sing in the Christmas concerts and plays or tear into their Christmas presents. Back home you will miss us being there to enjoy these things with you and, of course, the help we provide when all is getting a bit too chaotic. It is often hard for us here to feel the Christmas Spirit because of where we are and all that is or is not going on, please bear that in mind when we give lame answers to pressing Christmas questions.

I am certain my wife has been driven crazy by my lack of a clue as to what I want for Christmas. We are so far removed from our preferred world that I do not want to combine the two. To answer my wife as to what I want for Christmas, Ivey, all I want for Christmas is you. I will have to wait until we redeploy to unwrap my present and properly celebrate Christmas. I do not mean to imply we will not celebrate Christmas out here. Those of us deployed will celebrate Christmas, make no mistake, but it will be a Soldier's Christmas. It will be reflective and a bit subdued, because we are not where we want to be or with those we want. We will be with friends, Santa will come and we will have a good time.

The joy we will have is knowing, despite our absence, that our families are having a joyful Christmas in safety. We are here and we want you to have fun back there. We are deployed because we live in a free land where we can enjoy our lives. We want to make that available to the rest of the world. While we help bring this gift to the rest of the world, we also want you to enjoy yourselves. Do not over burden yourself this season as that will frustrate you, but take the time to enjoy it. Revel in the feeling of hope and joy that leads up to Christmas. Do not feel guilty for enjoying the season without us. We will be back to enjoy next Christmas with you.

Do take the time to realize what gifts in life are important. We have the gift of love and friendship as well as hope for better times to enjoy together. It is often through our separations we learn how much we care for each other. It is good to let each other know

how much you care as well. Times apart teach us the need of friendships. I encourage all of us to look out for each other this Christmas. Make sure everyone has some place to go.

If you feel that Christmas will be too much for you alone with the kids, invite someone to share Christmas with you. If you are without children do not hesitate to accept an invitation to have Christmas with a family. Do not forget to look out for those who need a friend. I will take this opportunity to make a suggestion. If you are a spouse with children ask a spouse without children to come over Christmas morning and share Christmas with you. If you are a spouse without children you can offer to help a spouse with children celebrate Christmas with her kids.

I say this because my family and I have always opened our home to single Soldiers or when I was last deployed my wife had a childless spouse over. The kids loved the extra attention, my wife had someone to talk with and her friend had an opportunity to be with a family when her husband was deployed and her own family was far away. Share the joy, share the love and enjoy the season with friends. As for us we will be fine. We will look after each other, we will share a good meal together, I will bring the message of hope this season offers in the birth of a Savior to any who wants to hear. We will miss you and next year we will celebrate together.

CH Brian Palmer
Chaplain, 1-24



Headquarters & Headquarters Company

Hammer Company is doing an outstanding job improving the quality of life of the populace throughout AO Hammer. This includes joint combat patrols with Iraqi Police, SWAT, and Army elements. Currently the focus is on essential services for the people, especially water. The Mortar platoon has located a reverse osmosis purification unit which will make the water drinkable by the people of Udaim (the largest town in AO Hammer). Green platoon has located numerous wells which only need to be tested and a pump and desalinization unit attached to create potable water. Soon the platoons will be conducting joint Humanitarian Assistance drops with Iraqi Security Forces to provide food and some blankets to the people.

The S1 shop is doing a phenomenal job at processing incoming and outgoing Soldiers. They are hard at work fixing pay issues so the Soldiers receive the proper entitlements while deployed. The S2 shop is busy processing mountains of information and assisting the companies in painting the tactical picture from the enemies perspective. The S4 has made leaps and bounds in improving the quality of life for the Soldiers stationed at the Company Out Posts. Our Soldiers in the S6 shop have practically produced miracles in communications, one of the most vital elements in our fight. Their determination for success is almost fanatical and greatly appreciated by the entire Battalion. Reenlistment is a weekly occurrence, almost daily at times. The Chaplain has been ministering to religious needs of the Battalion at all out posts. He has even been requested to minister to a new, small element based out of FOB Grizzly, to our north. The medics have been caring for the Soldiers of Deuce Four and some of the populace in certain situations. Their compassion for those in need is awe inspiring.

Thanksgiving went well with the majority of Hammer Soldiers feasting at our FOB DEFAC. Some of the leadership took part in serving the Soldiers and

occupants of FOB Warhorse. I want to thank them for taking their time on that special day to give to the most important assets we have; the Soldiers.

Hammer 6.
CPT Matthew Mackey
HHC, 1-24 IN
Commander

From Mortar Platoon: Onager Platoon is doing great things in Iraq. Since we have been here we have captured a weapons cache and reduced UXO that takes weapons out of the hands of the enemy. We have also trained and patrolled with the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police.

Among our most important accomplishments is the rescue of a puppy that we call Hammer. The puppy was actually

rescued by another unit but it had been neglected at our FOB. Our own SPC Sexton adopted him

and eventually the Battalion Commander commissioned him with the responsibility of a Force Protection Canine. He brightens everyone's day. He is healthy and cute as heck. He is a great addition to the Hammer family.

4 PLT / A Co: LT Cook and the Soldiers of Green Platoon successfully executed the first Raven Unmanned Aerial Vehicle mission of the company. The Soldier piloting the UAV did so with an uncanny skill that belied his experience. The Raven provided both day and night observation in areas of interest and revealed some suspicious activity which was later investigated and cleared.



HHC Points of Contact

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Alpha Company ATTACK!

Dear Family and Friends of Attack Company,

Well, two months down...so far, so good. This month, I thought I'd tell you a little about the area in which Attack Company is operating. We're responsible for an area spanning over 650 square kilometers (more than 8 times the area of Fairbanks), with a population in excess of 400,000 people (the entire population of Alaska is around 670,000). The population of our Area of Operations (AO) is about 70% Shi'a and 30% Sunni, so there are some pretty interesting sectarian issues that we deal with on a daily, if not hourly, basis. The terrain in our AO spans a wide spectrum, from desolate dessert, to canal-riddled farmland, to vast palm groves that are essentially triple-canopy jungle, to small villages, to bustling cities. We work hand-in-hand with the Iraqi Army, the Iraqi Police, and the Emergency Response Force (ERF), which is kind of like their S.W.A.T., but not really. In the summer, the temperatures will routinely be in the 120's, but right now, I see most the guys in their fleece jackets or polypro starting in the early evenings. Right now, it's the rainy season, so you have to be careful where you step (or drive) or you might discover a hidden patch of waist-deep mud. In the summer, however, we'll be begging for rain when everything is covered in layers of fine, powdery sand we call "moon dust".

Operationally, we are moving into a critical period in our deployment. We are currently gearing up to assist the Iraqi Army in registering all of the Sons of Iraq in our AO. The Sons of Iraq, also called Concerned Local Citizens, is essentially a "neighborhood watch" program started by Coalition Forces. Its members are regular citizens who last year finally decided they had had enough of the violence, and wanted to take back their towns. These local guardians man checkpoints in and around their towns and villages to help prevent insurgent groups from regaining a foothold where they have been ousted. The Sons of Iraq (SoI) registration is the first step in the Government of Iraq's plan to transition these groups from Coalition control to Iraqi control. Once they have been registered, the Government of Iraq will take over responsibility to pay them and to gradually transition them to long-term jobs within the government, whether it is in the Iraqi Army or working in some sort of public service capacity, like a water treatment facility or power plant. These SoI's were critical in the reduction of violence in Iraq over the last year, so Coalition Forces are dedicated to making sure they are taken care of. This transition may very well be the

defining achievement of our entire deployment.



Last month we celebrated Thanksgiving, and the decorations and treats sent by the FRG, along with the great spread put out by our Field Feeding Team, made it a pretty festive event. I had never seen our chow hall look so nice! I never would have thought that little things like paper turkeys and new tablecloths could have changed the look of the place so much and give such a boost to morale.

Speaking of morale, the biggest boost to morale a soldier can get (other than orders for an early return) is mail. Whether it's a care package chocked full of goodies, or just a simple letter telling about what's going on back home, getting mail is guaranteed to lift a soldier's spirits. Of course, based on the amount of mail we receive, you're all well aware of this. Keep it up! If you're stumped for ideas for what to include in a care package, snacks are always appreciated, but to be honest, I've found that there are a few things can really make a package memorable. Every now and then, try including a local or hometown newspaper. Soldiers love to tell each other about their home towns, and many haven't been home in awhile, so a newspaper makes them feel connected. Also, pictures of friends and family (and pets!) are great. I guarantee these will go to good use in decorating the soldier's living area. Some other ideas include a book by his favorite author, a magazine specializing in a hobby he enjoys, or even some travel brochures so he can think about things he wants to do after deployment. When in doubt, you can always ask a soldier what he wants or needs, but most will reply that they have everything that they need. That's why I think a surprise is the best thing you can put in a care package.

Well, I guess that's about it for now. Enjoy the photos, and keep the home fires burning!

Very Respectfully,

CPT M. Scott Jones
A CO, 1-24 IN
Commander

A CO Points of Contact

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FRG Leader:	Melody Hansen	melody.hansen@us.army.mil



Photos from Alpha Company

Photo left:
One of our outstanding Medics, SPC
Bearden treats a young Iraqi girl with
severe burns to her leg.



Photos above and below:
The two sides of SFC Hanlon



Photo above:
1st Platoon Soldiers work to recover a Stryker
that found a deceptively solid patch of ground.



Bravo Company Barbarians

Barbarian Friends and Family,

Another month has quickly passed and a great deal has happened since the last newsletter. The company has finally gotten some breathing room! We have spread out into the area formerly used by the Military Transition Team and the Air Force Engineers came in to build two new structures. We have gained close to 4000 square feet of living space! The engineers also rewired much of our electrical grid to two brand new generators that used to run one piece of equipment. The ridiculous fly problem seems to have passed as well, now that it has started getting colder at night.

SSG O’Crowley and CPT Stoltz have built a large rock climbing cave on the second floor from wood left over from the building construction and some great gear that SSG O’Crowley has brought from home. I think it is safe to say that this is the only rock wall on a JCOP, if not Iraq! Professionally built, “O’Crowley’s Cave” should give the soldiers a great activity to do that is fun and also good PT. It has drawn comments not only from our Battalion Commander, but others that visit as well.

The cooks did a great job with Thanksgiving this year. We had two real turkeys, two giant prime rib, all the normal pies, cakes, and vegetable we’re used to. SSG Jones even made an ice sculpture of a swan, lighted by 1SG Black’s blue bite-light! The officers, 1SG and Platoon Sergeants served chow as the soldiers moved through, probably giving out way more food than was necessary! LTC Reed and CSM Fulks also stopped by on their circuit to visit all the Combat Outposts that day.

The men of Bravo Company continue to do a great job. Not a week goes by where these guys have not found a new weapons cache or intelligence driving

a future operation. The guys have also started to visit local schools and clinics to see where we can make a lasting difference in Iraq, not just fight the weakening insurgency. We recently had an Associated Press photographer, Maya Allenruzzo, spend a few days with the company compiling photos for the various news agencies around the world. If you google “B 1-24 Infantry,” you should find most of her work as it pops up in periodicals like the Wall Street Journal, Medical Journals, and everything in between! One of the big events she was able to cover was our Combat Badge Ceremony held on December 4th. During this, we awarded Combat Infantryman’s Badges, Combat Action Badges, and the Combat Medic Badge to soldiers involved in an IED attack in October. The ceremony went very well; with the company formed up around a 6 foot tall bonfire, the Battalion Commander and the Command Sergeant Major gave some pretty good speeches to the men about what we’re doing here and why. LT Rodebaugh and 3rd Platoon also appeared in an article in the Christian Science Monitor that talked about a village in their Area of Operations last month.

Another thing you will see posted soon on the company website is a video made by CPT Stoltz and hosted by SPC Moore. This video, titled MTV Cribs – JCOP Key West, takes you through our home here in Iraq. It also will show you the day to day life here at the COP in a tongue and cheek fashion. All in all, a great video for you set to some music that I can only assume is popular these days!

Take care, write to your soldier, and we’ll see you soon.

-Barbarian 6
CPT Jeffrey Harmon
B Co, 1-24 IN
Commander

B CO Points of Contact

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Charlie Company Centurions

Since the last newsletter much has changed in the Centurion AO. The platoons have been actively searching for weapons caches and a “foot in the door” to the insurgent network. We have found numerous caches of various sizes with our Iraqi counterparts. The platoons have also spent numerous hours meeting with the local leaders to discuss the security, economic and essential service issues for each of their villages. They are making significant progress while continually improving our little part of Iraq.

Thanksgiving brought many visitors to Centurion Company. We had every commander from the Company level (me) to the Division level (MG Hertling, 1AD) come and visit COP ZAG. Special thanks go out to SSG Barry, SPC Dansby, SPC Sumner, PFC Richardson and PFC Scott for an amazing feast. We have all become accustomed to the overwhelming amount of food the sheikhs and mukhtars provide at our lunch meetings, but our Field Feeding Team put them to shame. I think everyone that ate at COP Zag would agree that the meal was one of the best Thanksgiving meals we have had.

Shortly after Thanksgiving, Engineers arrived at COP Zag to start working on improvements to our COP. This is the first of many steps in the near future to continue to improve our living conditions; although, most of our Soldiers would be happy with only a bigger gym. Your husbands spend more time working out than they have ever done before. By the time we redeploy, I think some will be able to enter the Mr. Olympia bodybuilding competition.

On 24 November at 1700, your husbands earned the privilege to wear the 25th Infantry Division unit patch on their right shoulder in addition to where they normally wear it on their left shoulder. As many of you know this signifies that your husband is a combat veteran. Earning the combat patch is a big day for all Soldiers. You should be proud of your husband’s service and accomplishment.

On 1 December we promoted SSG Mahoney and

SGT Krumbliis. Both promotions were long overdue and well deserved. These are two outstanding NCOs that continue to set the example for others to follow. We also promoted PVT McCalister, PVT Mustin, PFC Jobe, PFC Mapes and PFC Sharp. We are proud to have them on our Team.

Finally our roommates at COP Zag (the puppies) are doing well. They are getting bigger every day. I have included pictures of them as part of this article along with other pictures of the Company.

CENTURION 6

CPT Jeremiah Hurley

C CO, 1-24 Infantry

Commander



C CO Points of Contact

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Battalion News from Ft. Wainwright

Walk-To-Iraq-and-Back Stats



The Walk to Iraq program is in the middle of the 4th month, and 1-24 Infantry continues to represent themselves well among the other units involved. For the month of October our Battalion has walked 4147 miles! We are currently in first place for the number of miles walked per individual Battalion or Unit. The following individuals have contributed to that total:

Natalea Andersen, Sherilin Andersen, Maren Best, Maria Bretches, Mary Cheney, Adahmarie Chum, Tanya Dalton, Tawny DeBolt, Ashley Frenette, Julie Green, Misty Hack, Dawn Hurley, Trisha Kaer, Karen Lewis, Peri Lund, Joy Martin, Jeanette Mitchell, Sharyn Moore, Lindsey Parish, Michelle Porreca, Melinda Quick, Kirsten Reed, Andrea Ryker, Melanie Terrill, Dee VanAcker, Lisa VanAcker, Steven VanAcker, Michelle Whittier, & Rebecca Woolwine.

Congratulations to Lisa VanAcker of Charlie Company for, again, having walked the farthest distance in October, accumulating a total of 864 miles!

How can you earn extra miles?

- **Attending or participating in events** that are directly related to Soldiers (FRG meetings, events, socials, etc) are worth 5 mileage rewards for each event!
- **Utilizing any FMWR facility** is worth 10 mileage points.
- **Attend a class or event at ACS.** (AFTB, MOB/DEP, etc.) You will earn 25 miles for each class!
- **Self improvement.** This includes weight loss or improving your blood pressure. 1 mile will be awarded per every pound lost and 5 points lowered.

It isn't too late to join in the Walk to Iraq and Back. Contact Army Community Service (ACS) at 353-7298 for more information.



RSVP to: Sherilin Andersen, FRSA at 750-2191 or by email at: sherilin.m.andersen@us.army.mil

Bravo Company FRG Fun!



Echo Company — Rear Detachment

Short Days - Long Nights - Happy Holidays!

To the Families of 1-24....Happy Holidays!

I would like to take this opportunity to submit to the families of the Legion that, as we are all aware, the time of year we are in can be the most depressing part of the winter in Alaska. Not only because we will be spending the holidays, in many cases without our spouses and friends, but in addition daylight has become quite a limited proposition and the extremely low temperatures are slowly making our homes feel far less cozy a dwelling, and at least in my case, very restrictive. That being said, I would like to let you know that we are not without hope. In addition to E Co, there are many agencies which exist on Ft. Wainwright who are more than willing to assist us in traversing these most stressful times. Following is a list of Agencies available with point of contact phone numbers. If you, or someone you know, doesn't feel comfortable bringing a matter/situation to my attention - or any part of E Co for that matter, this will give you another avenue to find some assistance.

Military Family Life Consultants – 388-2552
 Army Community Services - 353-7298 or 347-4636 after hours
 Social Work Services – 361-6284
 Community Mental Health – 361-6059
 Alcohol/Substance Abuse - 361-9872
 Family Advocacy – 353-7315
 Financial Readiness – 353-4369
 Army Emergency Relief – 353-7453
 American Red Cross – 353-7234 or 1-877-272-7337 after hours
 Brigade Family Help Desk – 353-4180

Also, while we are on the subject of assistance, I would like to take this time to submit some remarks about the Army Community Services “Chiller Thriller” class which, I believe is definitely well worth the time, especially for anyone who will be experiencing their first winter in Alaska this year. The class is offered on Wednesday night 17 DEC 2008 from 6:30 to 7:30 PM at the Ft Wainwright Last Frontier Community Center and can be requested by FRG's or through E Co thereafter and as needed. This class covers such topics as

winter safety and preparation in addition to providing some helpful tips to ensure that you and your family remain healthy in this arctic environment.

As far as E Co, we are proud to have executed the forward movement of two replacement packages thus far to help reinforce and supplement the Legion in this Battalion's endeavors overseas. In my opinion, we as a battalion and brigade rear detachment are continuing to refine our processes both in the arena of training and otherwise.

I want to extend, on behalf of E Co, our sincerest wishes for a safe and happy holiday season to both our brothers overseas and their families here at home! We remain at your service!

Sincerely and Respectfully,

Strength and Honor!
 CPT Joseph M. Bolcar
 E Co., 1-24 IN
 Commander

Deployment Mailing Address

SOLDIER'S RANK AND NAME
 COMPANY, 1-24 IN
 FOB WARHORSE
 APO AE 09336

You may give out this address to your family and friends. Please check www.usps.com for guidelines on what can and cannot be mailed. A customs form will be required for all packages. Please allow a minimum of 2 weeks for delivery.

E CO Points of Contact

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